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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/571,069	12/07/2006	Hidemi Kurihara	0230-0245PUS1	2459
2292	7590	12/17/2007	EXAMINER	
BIRCH STEWART KOLASCH & BIRCH			MACFARLANE, STACEY NEE	
PO BOX 747			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
FALLS CHURCH, VA 22040-0747			1649	
NOTIFICATION DATE		DELIVERY MODE		
12/17/2007		ELECTRONIC		

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

mailroom@bskb.com

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/571,069	KURIHARA ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Stacey MacFarlane	1649	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 1 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-29 is/are pending in the application.
 - 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) ____ is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) 1-29 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date ____
- 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date ____
- 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) Other: ____

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Restriction is required under 35 U.S.C. 121 and 372.

This application contains the following inventions or groups of inventions which are not so linked as to form a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1.

In accordance with 37 CFR 1.499, applicant is required, in reply to this action, to elect a single invention to which the claims must be restricted.

Group I, claim(s) 1-9, drawn to a therapeutic agent for periodontal disease comprising a neurotrophic factor as an active ingredient.

Group II, claim(s) 10-17, drawn to a transplant for periodontal disease which comprises a neurotrophic factor.

Group III, claim(s) 18-25, drawn to a method for regenerating the periodontal tissue.

Group IV, claim(s) 26-27, drawn to a repaired dentin morphogenesis enhancer comprising a neurotrophic factor as an active ingredient.

Group V, claim(s) 28-29, drawn to a therapeutic method for pulpal disease comprising administering a neurotrophic factor.

The inventions listed as Groups I-V do not relate to a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1 because, under PCT Rule 13.2, they lack the same or corresponding special technical features for the following reasons: the single general inventive concept that permeates the groups is compositions and methods for treatment of a periodontal disease comprising a neurotrophic factor. The expression "special technical feature" is defined in Rule 13.2 as meaning those technical features that define a contribution which each of the inventions makes over the prior art. Whether a

particular feature makes a contribution over the prior art, is considered with respect to novelty and inventive step. The compositions and methods of the instant application, comprising a neurotrophic factor for treatment of a periodontal disease, does not make a contribution over the prior art as the following reference "clarifies [neurotrophins] function in tissue regeneration to maintain the homeostasis of the periodontal ligament" (last line, page 881 of Tsuboi et al., *Journal of Dental Research*, 80(3): 881-886, published 2001). The prior art recites the common technical feature of Groups I-V, thus, there is no special technical feature over the prior art and the application lacks Unity of Invention under PCT Rule 13.1.

Furthermore, pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.475 (a), Unity of invention before the International Searching Authority, an international and a national stage application shall relate to one invention only or to a group of inventions so linked as to form a single general inventive concept ("requirement of unity of invention"). Where a group of inventions is claimed in an application, the requirement of unity of invention shall be fulfilled only when there is a technical relationship among those inventions involving one or more of the same or corresponding special technical features. The expression "special technical features" shall mean those technical features that define a contribution which each of the claimed inventions, considered as a whole, makes over the prior art. As such, pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.475 (b), the ISA/US considers that when an international or a national stage application containing claims to different categories of invention unity of invention exists if the claims are drawn only to one of the following combinations of categories:

- (1) A product and a process specially adapted for the manufacture of said product; or
- (2) A product and process of use of said product; or
- (3) A product, a process specially adapted for the manufacture of the said product, and a use of the said product; or
- (4) A process and an apparatus or means specifically designed for carrying out the said process; or
- (5) A product, a process specially adapted for the manufacture of the said product, and an apparatus or means specifically designed for carrying out the said process.

The inventions of Groups I through V are drawn to three different products (therapeutic agent, transplant, and repaired dentin morphogenesis enhancer) and two distinct methods (regenerating periodontal tissue versus treating/preventing pulpal disease). The products as claimed are structurally distinct and therefore constitute patentably different products. Likewise, the methods as claimed are not obvious variants of one another and would be performed in distinct patient populations, namely patients in which the periodontal tissue requires regeneration versus patients requiring prevention of pulpal disease. Taken together, these inventions are patentably different categories that do not fall into one of the above product/process or product/process/apparatus combinations that the ISA/US considers as supporting unity of invention.

Species Election

2. This application contains claims directed to more than one species of the generic invention. These species are deemed to lack unity of invention because they are not so linked as to form a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1.

The species are as follows:

The structurally and functionally distinct neurotrophic factors such as, brain-derived neurotrophic factor, a nerve growth factor, neurotrophin-3, or neurotrophin-4/5.

Applicant is required, in reply to this action, to elect a single species to which the claims shall be restricted if no generic claim is finally held to be allowable. The reply must also identify the claims readable on the elected species, including any claims subsequently added. An argument that a claim is allowable or that all claims are generic is considered non-responsive unless accompanied by an election.

Upon the allowance of a generic claim, applicant will be entitled to consideration of claims to additional species which are written in dependent form or otherwise include all the limitations of an allowed generic claim as provided by 37 CFR 1.141. If claims are added after the election, applicant must indicate which are readable upon the elected species. MPEP § 809.02(a).

3. The claims are deemed to correspond to the species listed above in the following manner:

Claims 9, 17, 25 and 27 read upon different species of neurotrophic factors.

The following claim(s) are generic: Claim 1 is generic for Group I, Claim 8 is generic to Group II, Claim 18 is generic to Group III, Claim 26 is generic to Group IV, and Claim 28 is generic to Group V.

4. The species listed above do not relate to a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1 because, under PCT Rule 13.2, the species lack the same or corresponding special technical features for the following reasons: The neurotrophic factors listed are structurally distinct, bind to structurally different receptors and mediate distinct physiological responses within different cell types. Because they are structurally and functionally different, they are not obvious variants on one another and would each require a different search with the prior art.

Applicant is advised that the reply to this requirement to be complete must include (i) an election of a invention to be examined even though the requirement may be traversed (37 CFR 1.143) and (ii) identification of the claims encompassing the elected invention.

The election of an invention may be made with or without traverse. To reserve a right to petition, the election must be made with traverse. If the reply does not distinctly and specifically point out supposed errors in the restriction requirement, the election shall be treated as an election without traverse. Traversal must be presented at the time of election in order to be considered timely. Failure to timely traverse the requirement will result in the loss of right to petition under 37 CFR 1.144. If claims are added after

the election, applicant must indicate which of these claims are readable on the elected invention.

If claims are added after the election, applicant must indicate which of these claims are readable upon the elected invention.

Should applicant traverse on the ground that the inventions are not patentably distinct, applicant should submit evidence or identify such evidence now of record showing the inventions to be obvious variants or clearly admit on the record that this is the case. In either instance, if the examiner finds one of the inventions unpatentable over the prior art, the evidence or admission may be used in a rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) of the other invention.

Applicant is reminded that upon the cancellation of claims to a non-elected invention, the inventorship must be amended in compliance with 37 CFR 1.48(b) if one or more of the currently named inventors is no longer an inventor of at least one claim remaining in the application. Any amendment of inventorship must be accompanied by a request under 37 CFR 1.48(b) and by the fee required under 37 CFR 1.17(i).

The examiner has required restriction between product and process claims. Where applicant elects claims directed to the product, and the product claims are subsequently found allowable, withdrawn process claims that depend from or otherwise require all the limitations of the allowable product claim will be considered for rejoinder. All claims directed a nonelected process invention must require all the limitations of an allowable product claim for that process invention to be rejoined.

In the event of rejoinder, the requirement for restriction between the product claims and the rejoined process claims will be withdrawn, and the rejoined process claims will be fully examined for patentability in accordance with 37 CFR 1.104. Thus, to be allowable, the rejoined claims must meet all criteria for patentability including the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 101, 102, 103 and 112. Until all claims to the elected product are found allowable, an otherwise proper restriction requirement between product claims and process claims may be maintained. Withdrawn process claims that are not commensurate in scope with an allowable product claim will not be rejoined. See MPEP § 821.04(b). Additionally, in order to retain the right to rejoinder in accordance with the above policy, applicant is advised that the process claims should be amended during prosecution to require the limitations of the product claims. **Failure to do so may result in a loss of the right to rejoinder.** Further, note that the prohibition against double patenting rejections of 35 U.S.C. 121 does not apply where the restriction requirement is withdrawn by the examiner before the patent issues. See MPEP § 804.01.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Stacey MacFarlane whose telephone number is (571) 270-3057. The examiner can normally be reached on M,W and ALT. F 6 am to 3 pm, T & R 5:30 am - 4 pm..

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jeffrey Stucker can be reached on (571) 272-0911. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Stacey MacFarlane
Examiner
Art Unit 1649

/SNM/



OLGA N. CHERNYSHEV, PH.D.
PRIMARY EXAMINER